

# The Newsletter

## BERKSHIRE MILITARY MUSEUM

### THE STORY: GEORGE STEWART SMITH

GEORGE STEWART SMITH WAS BORN ON THE 22<sup>ND</sup> OF MARCH, 1888. HE WAS BORN IN TIMARU, NEW ZEALAND, TO ANTHONY A SMITH, AND HIS WIFE. GEORGE WAS A SCHOOL CADET FOR 2 YEARS IN MELBOURNE AUS, UNTIL HE ENLISTED FOR THE AUSTRALIAN ARMY ON APRIL 9<sup>TH</sup>, 1915. HE WAS SENT TO THE WESTERN FRONT AS 2<sup>ND</sup> LIEUTENANT, WHERE HE JOINED THE 59<sup>TH</sup> BATTALION. HE EMBARKED FROM MELBOURNE WITH HIS UNIT ABOARD THE TRANSPORT SHIP THEMISTOCLES ON JANUARY 28<sup>TH</sup>, 1916. GEORGE WON THE MILITARY CROSS, THE SECOND HIGHEST MILITARY AWARD IN AUSTRALIA, "FOR CONSPICUOUS GALLANTRY AND DEVOTION OF DUTY. DURING A NIGHT ATTACK HE LED HIS COMPANY TO ASSAULT IN THE FACE OF INTENSE MACHINE GUN FIRE WITH SUCH DASH THAT HE DISLODGED AND EITHER KILLED OR CAPTURED 90 OF THE ENEMY, AND 6 MACHINE GUNS WERE TAKEN. HIS LEADERSHIP ON THIS AND PREVIOUS OCCASIONS HAS BEEN OF VERY HIGH ORDER."

GEORGE ARRIVED BACK IN AUSTRALIA ON THE 29<sup>TH</sup> OF AUGUST, 1919, ABOARD THE TRANSPORT SHIP PORT OF MELBOURNE, AND WAS DISCHARGED ON OCTOBER 28<sup>TH</sup> OF THAT SAME YEAR. HE DIED ON JULY 31<sup>ST</sup>, 1924, FROM A WOUND SUSTAINED DURING THE WAR.

### IMPORTANT DATES IN MARCH:

- MAR. 3, 1918: RUSSIA AND GERMANY SIGN PEACE TREATY
- MAR. 21, 1918: GERMANS LAUNCH SPRING OFFENSIVE
- MAR. 13, 1938: HITLER DECLARES AUSTRIA PART OF THE 3 REICH
- MAR. 15, 1939: HITLER ANNEXES CZECHOSLOVAKIA
- MAR. 30, 1941: US SIEZES AXIS SHIPS
- MAR. 8, 1942: JAPANESE ENTER RANGOON
- MAR. 15, 1943: GERMAN ARMY RETAKES KHARKOV
- MAR. 19, 1944: GERMAN ARMY OCCUPIES HUNGARY
- MAR. 7, 1945: US TROOPS CROSS THE RHINE RIVER

## NEW ITEMS AT BMM

ONE OF THE NEWEST ITEMS AT THE BERKSHIRE MILITARY MUSEUM IS A WWII BAG. IT HAS POCKETS ON BOTH SIDES, AND BELONGED TO LIEUTENANT SIDNEY Q CURTISS, AN ICONIC SHEFFIELD LOCAL AND MASSACHUSETTS STATE FIGURE. MR CURTISS' BAG WAS FOUND AT A LOCAL ANTIQUE SHOP, AND WAS KINDLY DONATED BY A FRIEND AND SUPPORTER OF THE MUSEUM. THE BAG IS IN OVERALL GREAT CONDITION, WITH ONLY MINOR WEAR TO THE FABRIC.

STAY TUNED FOR MR CURTISS' STORY IN A FUTURE ISSUE.

